

AIRMAN'S SACKING WAS SCANDALOUS SAYS MP

THE MP for Chippenham, Mr Daniel Awdrey, will press for an adjournment debate in the House of Commons, to discuss the case of an RAF Corporal who was "compassionately discharged" after his wife gave birth to a spastic son.

The RAF discharged Mr Hubbard because his family circumstances prevented him from carrying out his duties properly. This followed an appeal

against his being posted to Cyprus.

Mr Hubbard has served with the RAF for about 10 years. Because he is now unable to complete 12 years' service he will not qualify for the £1,100 resettlement grant he would otherwise have received.

Said Mr Awdrey: 'I think this is scandalous. Mr Hubbard and his wife have a very severely handicapped son. For them it is a very long term problem. For the RAF it would be only a two-year problem, because he would be leaving after that, anyway.'

'They should at least grant him a proportion of the resettlement grant. But I don't see why they couldn't have found him a job which would have enabled him to stay at RAF Lyneham for the next two years. There must be an enormous number of jobs he could do there.'

'I think the RAF have handled this whole matter in an extremely impersonal way.

As far as I know, no one has even spoken to him about it. I should have thought that the whole business was very bad for morale in the RAF. It must be very unsettling to know that you can be discharged just because you have fallen into unhappy circumstances.'

A spokesman for the RAF said Mr Hubbard had been discharged because he could no longer fulfill the requirements of mobility. It would be unfair to his colleagues to make exceptions for him. All service personnel had to be able to travel at short notice.

He said that neither Mr Hubbard nor his wife had queried the decision of his discharge. And he said an officer had spent an entire afternoon explaining the circumstances to him.

But the spokesman said it would probably have made no difference even if a query had been made.

He said that there was no provision in the RAF for transferring an airman to a job which does not require travel. At any time they might be called away for exercises or training.

Prince Charles at Sheffield

THERE is great excitement at the Sheffield and Rotherham District Spastics Society's Work Centre just now. They are expecting a royal visit from the Prince of Wales.

Prince Charles will arrive at the work centre on the morning of December 18. He will spend 20 minutes chatting to employees and seeing how severely handicapped people cope with such jobs as drilling, tapping, fly and power press operating, assembling tyre pressure gauges and chocolate boxes and packing cutlery.

About 50 spastics currently attend the work centre. "We're all thrilled," said manager Mr Stanley Crowther. "It'll be a great occasion and a great honour. The first time anything like this has happened in Outbridge."



Shock report on tax grab made big news at AGM

MR DORRIEN BELSON, Chairman of The Spastics Society, is surrounded by television cameras and technicians as he prepares to be interviewed on the item of news which came as a bombshell at the Society's AGM in London on November 1. Not surprisingly, TV, radio and newspapers were highly interested in his shock revelation that a bequest to the Society of £600,000 has been mostly claimed by the tax authorities. The Society will only receive between £3,000 and £5,000 for its charitable work.

Mr Belson told the meeting that it had been the express wish of one of its founder members, Miss Jean Garwood, that the money she willed should be used to help spastics. Instead, the Society had been involved in 'wrangling' with the Exchequer over the money ever since, and to date had not received a penny of the legacy.

'The present position appears to be that the Society will only receive between £3,000 and £5,000. It remains a disquieting fact that anyone, especially someone as devoted to the Society as Miss Jean Garwood, who clearly states in a will that a sum of money

should be left to a charitable organisation, should be denied this wish for whatever reason,' he said. 'The whole sorry business emphasises what a vast difference there can be between the application of the letter of the law as opposed to the spirit of the law.'

The Capital Transfer Tax introduced last year included certain concessions for charities, he said, but these were still not sufficient. The Society hoped that 'one day a Chancellor of the Exchequer will actually encourage people with large fortunes to bequeath these for the good of their fellow men, and take steps accordingly to exempt charitable bequests from any form of tax whatsoever.'

● More about the AGM on Pages 6 and 7.

President dies

THE Scottish Council for Spastics, and spastics throughout Scotland generally, learned with very deep regret of the death on November 17 of their honorary president, Lord Elphinstone. He was 61. Lord Elphinstone, a cousin of the Queen, had been president for the past 18 years. He was captured by the Germans in the early days of the last war and spent more than five years in captivity, for part of the time in the notorious Colditz prison.

'62 Club finds a champion...

THE BBC's refusal to allow a party from the London '62 Club to attend a television show has been taken up by MP Mr Frank Hooley. After reading in last month's Spastics News that severely disabled people in wheelchairs could not be accommodated in BBC studios because of safety regulations, Mr Hooley has written to the Chairman of the Corporation, Sir Michael Swann.

He told Sir Michael: 'I am sure that as a matter of general policy the BBC would not wish to prevent handicapped persons from attending TV shows, but it looks as though the message may not have penetrated down the line.'

'I do appreciate that there would be technical difficulties in coping with persons in wheelchairs amid all the apparatus of lights and cables and cameras which are essential for TV recording. Nevertheless may I suggest that on those occasions when it is intended that invited audiences should be in the studio, some special allowance be made for a limited number of handicapped persons to be accommodated.'

Meanwhile the London '62 Club is not taking the BBC's rebuttal lying down. Secretary Janice Hancock, who is herself confined to a wheelchair, has sent off a number of letters, hoping to remedy the situation.

She has written to the Director-General of the BBC, Sir Charles Curran, pointing out that despite the difficulties, it is incredible that an organisation as large and influential as the BBC should not cater for the disabled among its audiences. It was even more unbelievable, she said, bearing in mind the Corporation's

enlightened attitude towards the problems of the handicapped as far as programme output is concerned.

Janice has also applied once more to the ticket unit of the BBC for a group from the Club to attend a show. She points out that in the past she has herself attended a tele-recording in her wheelchair.

And she has taken Thames Television up on their offer to discuss ways in which handicapped people can be accommodated as part of a studio audience. The offer was extended through last month's Spastics News.

Mr Badman shows he is a very good man

LEN BADMAN, 82, must be the most inappropriately named person in the country. For when he discovered he had won £10,000 in the News of the World Spot the Ball Competition, Len decided to give it away to charity.

The money will be divided between The Spastics Society and the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals. However, he will retain a few hundreds to treat old pals in the Bermondsey area of London, where he lived until retiring to Suffolk 20 years ago.

'What do I want with all that money at my age,' said Len. 'I've got everything I need.'



WITH increased postal charges threatening the sale of Christmas cards generally, Local Groups have been asked to redouble their efforts, to ensure that the Society corners its share of the market. Barnsley Spastics Association played their part by exhibiting the cards at their Fair. Mayor elect Cr Frank Kaye makes his selection, helped by Group Secretary Mrs E. Shear, Chairman Mr J. Sosnowski and Treasurer Mrs J. Dawson.

Frogs French frolic

FROGS are well known for turning into princesses. But the ones at The Spastics Society's headquarters in London look like turning into fairy godmothers for one lucky couple.

FOR FROGS is the latest Spastics Society fund raising group. And they have already taken a giant leap forward by spawning their first fund raising idea—a lottery. And the first prize is a weekend in Paris for two.

Other prizes include a Grundig radio presented by Rediffusion; a Philips cassette recorder with tapes, an Ingersoll alarm watch, a continental quilt given by Marks and Spencers, an ovenproof dinner and tea set, a complete set of luggage, dinners out at expensive restaurants, whisky, champagne, records, books

and so on.

Explained Frankie Green, the Chairman of FROGS—Fund Raising Organising Group for Spastics: 'We intend to raise more than £500. This is to buy an electric typewriter fitted with an expanding keyboard, for the Society's Fitzroy Square Centre.'

'This means selling over 12,000 tickets. So we hope to have every member of staff selling tickets as well as buying them.'

FROGS was formed with the idea of giving younger members of the staff at Park Crescent an insight and interest in fund raising. Committee members include Christine McDonagh, Margaret Spencer, Graham Dawson, Christine Woore, Michael O'Callaghan, Pat Isaac and Rusty Wright.

Record sales for Remplo

REMPLOY Ltd, the national organisation for the employment of severely disabled people, celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.

At the Annual General Meeting, held at the Waldorf Hotel, London, in November, it was announced that the company had made record sales of over £20 million during the financial year 1974/75. This was an increase of 25 per cent on the previous year's figures which, taking into consideration inflation at 21 per cent represented an increase of four per cent.

The company now has 86 factories throughout Britain. In April 1974 it had 8,077 disabled employees and during the next 12 months engaged a further 1,758 severely disabled workers. This meant an average work force of 8,190 during the year—the highest figure since the company was formed in 1945.

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Dinner and a cheque from bowls players

MR GEORGE HOWARD, of the Norfolk and Norwich Spastics Association received £668 for group funds when he was a guest at the annual dinner of the North Norfolk Spastic Bowls League.

The total was made up of £300 from the league, £230 from a competition organised by Mrs Ursula Edwards, wife of the league secretary, £77 from Erpingham Ladies Bowls Club, £50 from Crane Fruehauf Bowls Club and £11 from the Nelson public house bowls club, North Walsham.

A COUNTRY fair held at Holne Village, Devon, raised £265 for the Devon and Exeter Spastic Society.

BEDFORD Spastics Society has celebrated its coming of age with an anniversary ball, attended by 70 guests. Several members who helped found the group 21 years ago, were present, including Mrs J. Godber, Dr J. Easton and Lt Cdr R. Whittingham.

Bottle on a pub crawl

THE beer drinkers of Widnes are being asked to help fill a bottle, while they are whiling away the opening hours by emptying a few. The large, brightly painted bottle is doing the rounds of the local pubs. It sits on the bar of each pub for a week to collect money for the Widnes Spastics Fellowship before moving on. The fellowship needs to raise £6,000 to cover the cost of its new headquarters. Above are members of the Fellowship in their new HQ.

Photo by courtesy of the Widnes Weekly News.

£100 trudge

MR R. BEAVER, of Plymouth, enjoys a walk. But he excelled himself when he trudged 48 miles from Plymouth to Launceston and back. Of course the event was sponsored, and Mr Beaver raised a total of £100 for the Plymouth Spastics Centre. He was helped by Mr R. Shortt, of the appeals committee.

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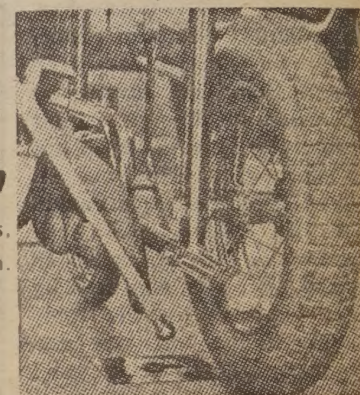
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Some spastics CAN'T be independent

ARE we trying to make spastics too independent? This thought-provoking question was raised by Dr N. P. Burman, Chairman of the North Surrey Group in 'Links London,' the news-sheet published by the Society's London Regional Office.

Dr Burman writes: 'The Society's propaganda has been so successful that we seem to have nearly convinced ourselves that all spastics are of normal or higher intelligence and are capable of some measure of independence and responsibility. The truth, however, is considerably different, as a fairly high proportion of spastics are mentally handicapped, many are educationally subnormal and

many are ineducable. Because of this they are very vulnerable if a misguided attempt is made to make them more independent, when in fact they need constant supervision and care.

'Although many work very well under supervision in special work centres, they are not adequately catered for in the Society's hostels and holiday homes, all of which seem positively to encourage a degree of independence which is unsuitable for many mentally handicapped spastics.

'They are a severe strain on their parents because of the absence of suitable short stay accommodation giving constant supervision, and I should be pleased to see the Society giving more attention to their needs.'

... But a great many can

MISS M. R. Morgan, the Society's Controller of Personal Social Services and Mr Richard Gray, Controller of Schools and Centres, have written:

It is not true that The Spastics Society is only concerned about spastic people who make progress and provides no services for the more limited, needing supervision and care. Increasingly, the Society aims to meet the needs of the multi-handicapped who are unable to enter fully into the life of the community.

However much the Society can provide, within the limits of the present economic crisis, it is clearly not possible or even desirable to attempt to meet everybody's needs. Cerebral palsy covers a wide range of handicaps and from experience we have found that many spastic children and adults benefit a great deal from service provided by local authorities and other organisations. This applies specially to spastic people whose motor handicap is mild but who are

intellectually retarded. Many of the social and holiday services arranged by outside bodies for mentally handicapped young people may be more suitable for some spastic people than those planned for a much heavier degree of physical handicap.

Although we appreciate the severe strain on parents coping with multi-handicapped youngsters all through the year, we would question whether some of these young people need to be as dependent as they have become. We have found that an encouraging number of intellectually retarded people have continued to develop and mature after leaving school. They learn to make decisions, take responsibility for themselves and respond to new challenges within their personal limitations. This obviously involves taking some calculated risks but isn't this preferable to a life of total dependence which may not always be necessary?

Jim's two worlds

THE quiet dedication which goes with voluntary service seems a far cry from the commercial brashness of the pop scene. Yet Jimmy Savile, OBE, has managed to combine the two worlds just by being uniquely himself.

Back in the 1950s, the ex-Bevin Boy from Leeds became the world's first-ever disc jockey, and in the wake of this invention followed the whole pop-culture explosion of modern times.

This Spastics News interview took place in a BBC radio studio, between intervals of recording 'Savile's Travels.' At the same time, Jimmy was dictating copy over the telephone for his weekly column in the Sunday People, entertaining visitors to the studio and paying outrageous compliments to every female in sight.

He was wearing a scarlet tracksuit with an ostentatious gold bracelet and a cluster of chunky rings. The right-hand side of his face was bearded and the left clean-shaven.

Among the other visitors to the studio was Paul, a severely-disabled boy, aged about 12, very badly smashed up and who had not been expected to live, but after 18 months in Stoke Mandeville he has been able to go home and now attends a special school daily.

One suspects that his recovery may have had something to do with Jimmy's bullying him into staying alive. The disc jockey has been visiting Stoke Mandeville regularly for seven years now and has been officially designated Entertainment Officer. He says that 70 per cent of the people who appear with him in the 'Clunk Click' advertisements on ITV are Stoke Mandeville patients, and all are genuine road accident victims, not skilfully made-up actors.

Jimmy has also been a voluntary porter at Leeds Infirmary for the past nine years, besides supporting a host of other charities.

This charity work of his is certainly not a publicity gimmick. Portering and long-distance walking demand sustained physical effort and there is no question merely of opening the occasional bazaar or being photographed distributing gifts at Christmas.

'Anyway, it's nothing new,' he told me. 'My family has

always been interested in social work and I was doing this kind of thing long before I ever became well known.'

He went on to speak of his friendship with Michael, a severely-handicapped spastic man—'One of the great characters of the world,' who hitch-hikes extensively in his wheelchair, wearing cowboy gear and armed with a letter from a senior police officer in case of trouble. When not thumbing his way round the world, Michael lives with his parents, but Jimmy hints darkly that there are some people who wish to curb his activities by putting him into a home. This restrictive attitude is one reason why Jimmy is not enamoured of large organised charities.

His own approach to disabled people is the reverse of patronising because he sees them all as individuals. He calls them unprintable names and makes scurrilous remarks about their supposed relations with the opposite sex. Michael, the hitch-hiker, sought him out one day at Stoke Mandeville.

The spastic man wanted to visit America, and Jimmy walked all the way from Trafalgar Square to Wembley Pool, pushing him in his wheelchair. En route, they collected £1,000 from spon-

sors so that Michael could go on his dream holiday accompanied by a friend. He made the journey last year and is now back home in Britain.

Jimmy says he doesn't stay in one place long enough to make any close friends. He has never married and commutes between seven homes scattered around the country. His two sound radio programmes 'Savile's Travels' and 'Speakeasy,' together with television's 'Top of the Pops' and 'Jim'll Fix It' are all running at peak popularity and he says his broadcasting commitments take up only half a day a week. 'The rest of the time I chase girls!'

'And your charity work?'

'They pay me in nurses—ten a week!'

This joyous, if somewhat chauvinistic attitude to women goes with the typical 'Show Biz' image. But Jimmy does not drink, which must be something of a record in the entertainment profession. He also firmly believes in God and finds his Catholic faith helps him to accept the fact of death, met often in his hospital work.

'I'm glad for people when they die, because they go straight to Heaven.' He said with unshakable conviction. For once, he was not joking.

ANNE PLUMMER.

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'Strong protest' on calf exports — and more about that word 'spastic'

I AM a subscriber of an organisation called 'Compassion in World Farming'. This organisation among others is organising petitions signed by the public against live export of animals. These petitions are being sent to MPs all over the country.

I was shocked when reading *Spastics News* to see that one of your farms has started to export animals to Greece and Italy. I am aware that this is only on a small scale but nevertheless I would like to

leaflets to the appropriate authority who will, I hope, reconsider the matter.

I would like to add that I have the greatest regard for the work done by your Society and I wish you all the best in the future.

**M. Ashby (Miss),
Bournehall Avenue,
Bushey,
Herts.**

MR E. A. RHODES, warden of Thorngrove, the Society's agricultural centre in Dorset, comments:

Calf rearing at Thorngrove is always carried out under contract to a local farming co-operative, calves being purchased from the organisation and sold back to them on reaching a certain age and weight.

We have never ourselves exported calves and, in the case in question, only after we had sold the calves did we discover they were to be exported. The organisation responsible is most reputable. The calves exported were in fact transported by air and did not undergo a long and hazardous journey. I am assured that the utmost supervision was exercised at all times.

With agriculture in its present state we are unable to afford to rear calves at Thorngrove and therefore the situation is unlikely to occur again in the foreseeable future.

I READ with interest the letters about the word spastic, a rose by any other name never smelt sweeter, so let us keep the name we are now all known and recognised by, especially as it has taken us years to sort out the definitions of spastic from PLASTIC as happened a few years ago, when the able-bodied were trying to see through us! I prefer spastic or handicapped, to the Biblical word 'cripple,' and certainly not 'invalids,' which both give a very pathetic picture of twisted body.

I have been asked what a spastic is, by quite intelligent people, but as soon as I mention 'brain damage at birth,' the expression on their faces always immediately alters, before I can get any further, with 'Oh! I see.'

How do others explain it? I always add that everyone is affected in a different way, like every other walk of life from an above average IQ to lower than average; as simple as that. Thanking you once again for *Spastics News*, long may it live, and The Spastics Society itself and all that it does.

**Marjorie Chappel, Miss,
6 Butts Close,
Marnhull,
Sturminster,
Newton,
Dorset DT1 1QB.**

I HAVE been reading with great interest the letters you have been receiving concerning the use of the word 'spastic' and readers may like to know of an episode that occurred in the very early days of the then National Spastics Society when I was a worker in industry. At that time I used to serve on the Executive Committee of the Society and one day at work the Works Medical Officer came up to me and he said, 'Bill, I wonder if you and your friends in London appreciate the damage they are doing by giving people a label, they will never forgive you for it.'

I only know that at one stage of my life I was an ordinary disabled person living quite happily within the community. The next day because the word 'spastic' was suddenly brought into active use, I became a member of a minority group. One must of course appreciate that in the early days decisions had to be made which were most urgent, the chief of which at that time was how to raise money to help the cerebral palsied, and it was the use of the word 'spastic' as an omnibus word that really helped the cause to an extent which was unprecedented at the time. And so while I greatly regret that one has to use the word 'spastic' I have to really count blessings also.

**W. M. C. Hargreaves,
Mr,
Head of Recreational
Services,
The Spastics Society.**

SPORTS SCENE

The coming year promises to be a very full and exciting one as far as sporting events are concerned. Lots of new events are planned, and the traditional ones look like being bigger and better than ever.

Golf is one of the new sports which spastics are becoming involved in. And a special Golf Week is planned for April, at the Star Centre for Spastics, at Cheltenham, where there is a nine-hole golf course.

Mr Arthur Edwards, the Society's Physical Education Adviser, says that relatively lightly handicapped people will take part. It would be virtually impossible for someone in a wheelchair to cover a complete golf course.

'Nevertheless we shall be catering for people who have the use of only one arm,' said Mr Edwards. 'We have left- and right-handed clubs available. And several local professional golfers have agreed to come in and teach.'

Another new and adventurous sport for spastics is ski bobs, which is something like tobogganing except that you use a kind of tricycle with skis instead of wheels. 'We've tried this with great success in Wales,' said Mr Edwards. 'A group of youngsters with various disabilities had a go.'

'It took a little while to master the technique, but once they'd done that they went great guns. I hope to arrange to use the ski-slope at Crystal Palace for a course during April. At the moment it depends on whether or not the Ski Bobbing Association can supply us with instructors.'

Good news always travels

in threes so they say, and there is a third new sporting activity already under way for spastics. It's rifle shooting—target variety, not hunting.

Students at the society's Thomas Delarue School at Tonbridge began small bore shooting using air guns last month. So far only senior pupils take part. It's hoped to construct a covered firing area so that shooting can take place even in the bad weather.

International

As far as Spastics Games are concerned, there'll be the International Games at Montrod, in France, in July. Nationally there'll be eight Area Games in June, the same as this year. However, instead of a National Games, there will be Northern Counties Games and Southern Counties Games. This is to keep down costs, bearing in mind the International event.

Finally a completely novel event. It's an International Meet, at Churchtown Farm, in Cornwall, in which teams comprising seven spastics and three able bodied helpers will take part.

There'll be a series of events including sailing, archery, canoeing, riding, orienteering (ie, the art of not getting lost) and others. Teams will be awarded points according to their success.

There will, of course, be full coverage of all these events in *Spastics News*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

register a strong protest and to bring to light points of which you may not be aware.

1. Although some abattoirs in Greece use humane killers, there are some who don't.

2. There is also the risk that Greece sends some animals to North Africa after fattening them for a while.

The point of our petitions is that we would like animals killed in this country, so they will be spared the long and difficult journey abroad. I enclose a few leaflets for your attention.

I hope if not able to commence any action yourself, you will forward this letter plus

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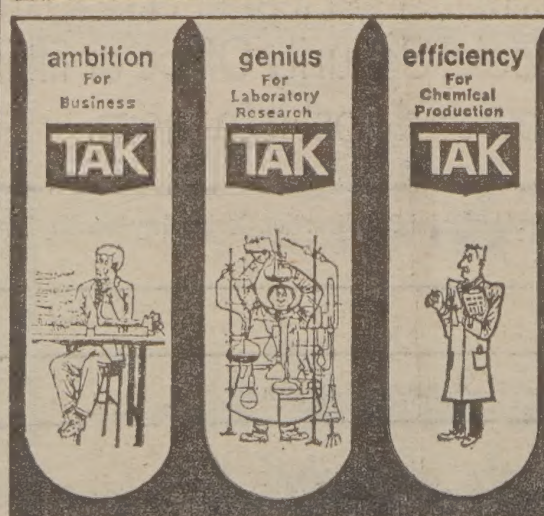
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IT has become a happy tradition now for delegates who have travelled to London for The Spastics Society's Annual General Meeting to be entertained to a wine and cheese party at the Society's headquarters on the eve of the meeting.

At the party, delegates from local groups all over the country can get together in a relaxed atmosphere to meet each other, and discuss the problems which confront voluntary workers in these inflation-ridden days when they face such great difficulties. And they can meet members of the Society's staff and hear at first hand about the Society's activities.

Spastics News takes a page from the social magazines to show you some of the people who were there.

Party prelude to the AGM



MRS C. E. Williams, a member of the Executive Council, and chairman of the Monmouthshire Spastics Society, with Mrs B. McCorkell and Mrs N. Parkin of the Lancaster, Morecambe and District Spastics Society.



MR Len Daly, secretary/organiser of the York and District group, Mrs Connie Waugh, of the Durham Spastics Society, Mr Geoff Berryman, of the Durham County Spastics Committee, Mr Michael James, senior regional officer for the North East, Mrs Doris Simpson, chairman of the York group.



MRS Penny Wilson, local appeals officer in the London region, with Miss Penelope Godfrey, who is secretary to the Chairman of the Society at the international company of which he is a director.



BRIGADIER Trevor Mossman, chairman of the Bath and Districts Spastics Society, and Mr Peter Murrish, the Society's Senior Capital Campaigns Organiser.



MISS Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd, daughter of a founder of the Society, with Mrs Velma Klinger, an inspector on special education in London, who taught Rosemary at a Croydon school.



MR R. J. Laver, a director of Top Ten Promotions Ltd, the organisers of the Spastics Pool, Miss Charmian Mould, senior regional officer West, Mr John Pritchard, of Top Ten, and Mr Ken Pole, of Goodprint Supplies Ltd.



MRS M. C. Coombes, of the Wycombe and district group, Mr G. O. Williams, treasurer of the Monmouthshire group, Mr J. C. N. Coombes of the Wycombe group, and chairman of the East Region Co-ordinating committee, and Mr Bill Hargreaves, the Society's head of recreational services.



MR R. Tanner of the Kingston adult house unit, Mr A. G. Kidd, a social work assistant at the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre, Fitzroy Square, London, Mrs Tanner, and Miss G. Parsons, residential services officer for the Society.



MR K. Jones, chairman of the Skegness group, Mrs Jones, Mrs Valerie Clegg, of the East Staffordshire group, and Mr Mike Venables, the Society's senior regional officer for the Midlands.



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Chairman tells AGM:

Society holds admin costs at 5p in the £

OUT of every £1 raised by The Spastics Society, 79p goes on direct help to spastics, 16p is split between research, information and fund-raising — and only 5p is spent on administration. The very low figure of 5p was a notable achievement at a time when there has been some criticism and possible disillusionment among the public of the way that charities spend the money they raise, said Mr Dorrien Belson, Chairman of the Society, at the Annual General Meeting in London on November 1.

He assured the hundreds of delegates from local groups throughout the country who packed the meeting that the Society continued to closely examine its own expenditure, and while it was not complacent, it was encouraging to be able to record that only 5p in the £ was spent on administration during the last financial year, especially in such a difficult time.

The Executive Council the Society's governing body—was very conscious that it was the trustee of public money, and felt it prudent to make it more widely known how every £ given was spent, because charities needed the support of the public more than ever before.

The 'enormous' rate of inflation during the last year has had a disastrous effect on the Society, said Mr Belson.

Costs rise

'Both central and local government expenditure is having to be cut just at a time when the cost to the Society of residential care, schooling and the various services we provide has risen to new, almost unbelievable, levels. This is a situation which is causing a great amount of anguished rethinking, not only by the Government, but by ourselves within the Society.'

He welcomed the introduction of the Government's new non-contributory invalidity pension and mobility allowance for the disabled, but went on:

'So much for the Government—local authorities, however, present a rather different picture. Various reports are beginning to appear in the press about cuts being made by local authorities in expendi-

ture on social services... We can appreciate the dilemma facing local authorities who, in spite of inflation, are being urged to maintain, or rather increase, their services to the disabled, while at the same time being under similar, if not greater, pressures to reduce their demand for rates. In this situation local authorities will surely be obliged to reassess their priorities. We can only hope that they will do so in such a way that will allow necessary funds to be allocated to those most in need.

'It seems inevitable that voluntary organisations must face increasingly hard times in the future as inflation bites deeper and deeper.

'What can we do about this? What, indeed, should we do? Firstly, I believe that we must not let this situation get us down. There are things we have already done, and can yet do. In spite of inflation and the general adverse economic conditions during the last year, the Society and its local groups have not only been able to maintain their residential centres, workshops, schools and services all over the country, but have in fact opened five new centres. In a year when, as you've already heard, expenditure has far exceeded income, this has only been possible by drawing on our reserves.

Mr Belson said the financial crisis was serious but 'I should be far more concerned if we were facing a crisis of people but we are not. We are a voluntary organisation and we have thousands of volunteers in 180



OUR picture shows some Society's Annual General

Spastics Pool—a story of progress

THE 'totally inescapable' major problem facing the Spastics Pool is inflation, aggravated by the national crisis causing short-time working and redundancies in factories and offices, making it increasingly difficult for Pool collectors to maintain continuous contact with their members.

'This is beginning to reflect an accelerated adverse trend in our membership figures,' said Mr Geoffrey Arter, a director of Top Ten Promotions Ltd, the promoters of the Spastics Pool, when he spoke at the AGM.

Surprisingly, the economic situation had not reacted unfavourably against the Pool when collectors were endeavouring to enrol new members during the last year, went on Mr Arter. The public was still receptive when requested to join the Pool, and whatever the economic conditions there was a vast, largely untapped potential in many parts of the country.

Mr Arter recalled the beginnings of the Spastics Pool which has been the Society's major source of funds for nearly 20 years, and suggested that the Society's work would be restricted today were it not for the millions of members who have subscribed to the pool since 1957.

When the Pool was launched, the founders hoped for a membership of 250,000, and they looked forward optimistically to the year when this magical figure would be achieved. However, the Pool advanced in leaps and bounds, with 32,000 joining in the first week in August 1957, and a membership of 100,000 by Christmas. In September, 1958, just 13 months after the launch of the

Our strength

'The real strength of this Society lies both in the number and calibre of our voluntary supporters—so well represented by this record gathering here today.

'It may be that both we, as well as those we seek to help, will all have to forgo still more of the things we would all like to do, or would all like to have, but in spite of inflation, and in spite of this country's present economic plight, we shall continue, together, come what may, to provide vital services, and indeed expand them, for the benefit of those for whom this Society was founded.

The Council

Earlier in his speech, Mr Belson emphasised the important functions of the Executive Council, and said that with the tremendous growth of the Society over the years, there was a risk that the Council might 'drift into shelving our responsibilities increasingly on to the staff whom we employ, with the result that the role of the Executive Council members might easily lapse into them becoming remote top-

Cont on Page 8



SCRUTINEERS prepare to count the votes in the keenly contested election for Executive Council seats. Standing right are Mr Alan King, the Society's Assistant Director, Finance, and Mr A. Diamond, the Society's Secretary.

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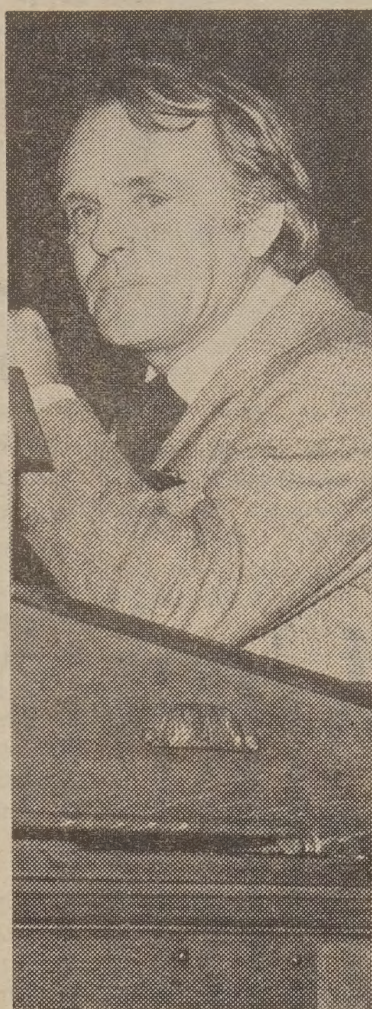
Meeting entertained by star speaker

ENTERTAINER Dickie Henderson looks quietly thoughtful as he stands at the lectern at the Royal College of Surgeons—a picture which does not really reflect the faces of his audience, delighted by his address at the AGM. For while Mr Henderson did speak seriously about the work of the Stars Organisation for Spastics—he is a past Chairman, and untiring worker for the SOS—a comedian of such skill and fame could not resist the opportunity of rocking 'em in the aisles!

Sincerity

The stately hall at the College with its panelled walls and portraits of surgical luminaries, has probably never resounded to such gales of laughter as Dickie Henderson recounted hilarious adventures on the fund-raising trail. But throughout all the jokes, the sincerity of the ideal behind the SOS shone through, and the delegates to the AGM were left in no doubt that the stars who band together to help spastics (the SOS runs two centres already and is now building a third) have a deep personal involvement in the cause.

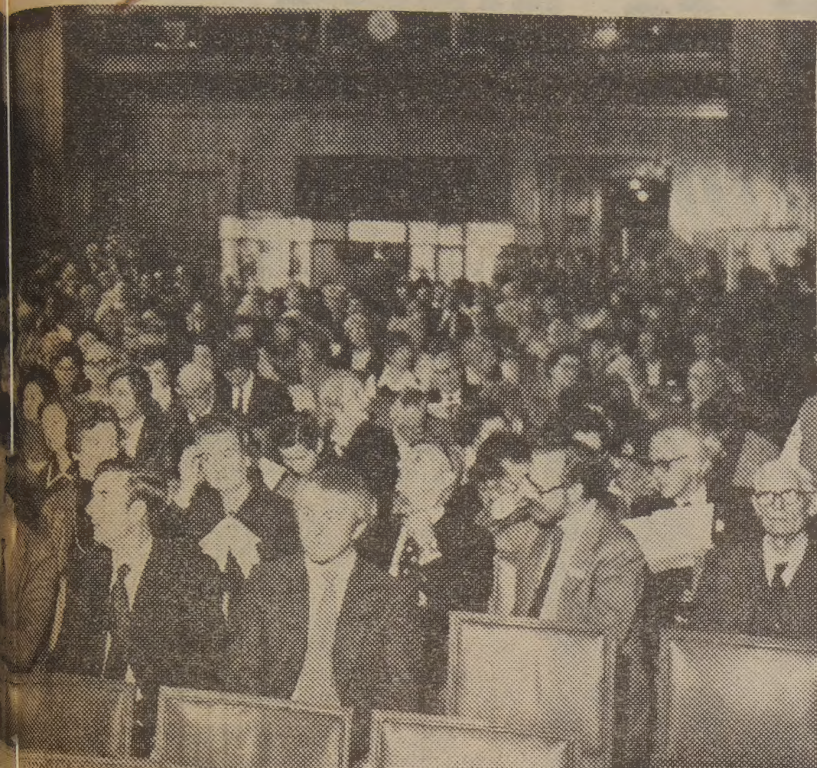
It was such a good speech, that perhaps it was a good thing that fellow comedian Eric Sykes did not write it after all! This was the original plan, or so Dickie Henderson



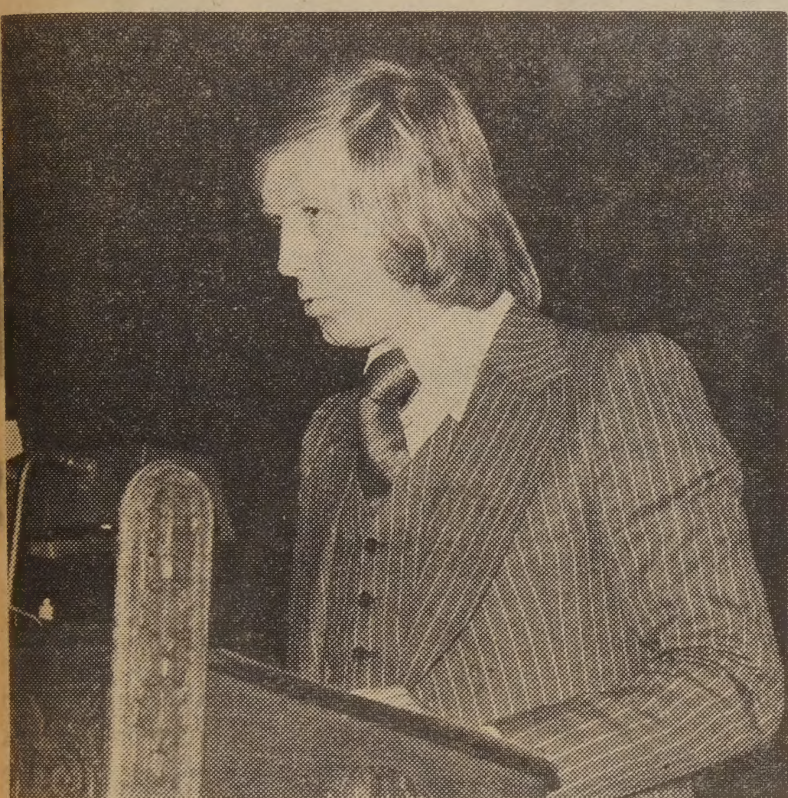
led his trusting audience to believe. . . .

Eric Sykes, we were assured, provides speeches for all occasions at £1.50 a time, and when Dickie agreed to speak at the AGM he sent off an order with the cash.

'But I think they sent me the wrong speech,' he said. 'It began, "My husband and I" . . . and ended "God bless all who sail in her".'



of the hundreds of delegates who packed the hall for the meeting at the Royal College of Surgeons, London.



Mr Geoffrey Arter

Six elected to Executive Council



THE six men and women who were successful in the election at the AGM for seats on The Spastics Society's Executive Council. They are, from left to right, Mr Adrian Wright, Mrs Clara Williams, Mr Peter Rigby, Mr William Burn, Dr Millicent Regan and Mr Denis Bean. Mr Rigby is a new member of the Executive—the others were already serving on the Society's 15-strong governing body.

Mr Wright, a Bristol solicitor, is himself a spastic and has been a member of the Council since 1972. He is also chairman of the Kingsley Hall sub-committee, vice-president of the Association of '62 Clubs,

treasurer of the Bristol and Bath '62 Club, and a member of The Spastics Society's finance committee.

Mrs Williams, a housewife from Pontypool, has been a member of the Council since 1972. She is the parent of a spastic child, and chairman of the Monmouthshire Spastics Society. She is also chairman of its local committees. In addition, she is trustee and a member of the management committee of the Monmouthshire Spastics Work Centre and a member of the South Wales district committee.

Mr Rigby, a company director, is the chairman and founder of the Hornsey centre for handicapped children, a day centre which educates and treats children of varying

handicaps, mostly of nursery age. He has been a member of Haringey Council since 1964.

Mr Rigby is a co-founder of the Habinteg Housing Association, which was set up to provide integrated housing for the handicapped with the able-bodied.

Mr Burn, a retired chartered accountant, was chairman of the Executive Council from 1966-73, and has been a member of the Council since 1959. He is the father of a spastic son, and has been closely involved with every committee and body concerned with major policy and decision-making within the Society.

Dr Regan, a community physician, is adviser to the

board of governors, Melrose House and Ronald House special schools, a member of the Sefton Association for Mental Health, a member of the Society of Community Medicine and a past president of the Soroptimist Club of Bootle.

Mr Bean, a retired oil company executive, was co-opted a member of the Executive Council earlier this year. He has been chairman of the Hertfordshire Spastics Society since 1972 and was previously chairman for the seven years prior to 1967. In addition, Mr Bean is chairman of the Society's public relations and fund raising committee, and is a member of the East Regional co-ordinating committee.

More about the AGM on Page 8

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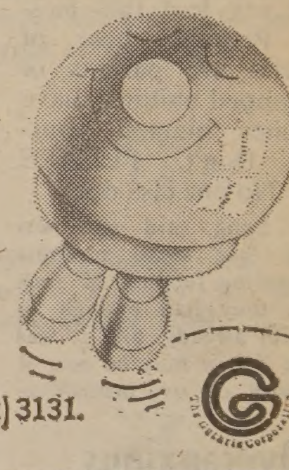
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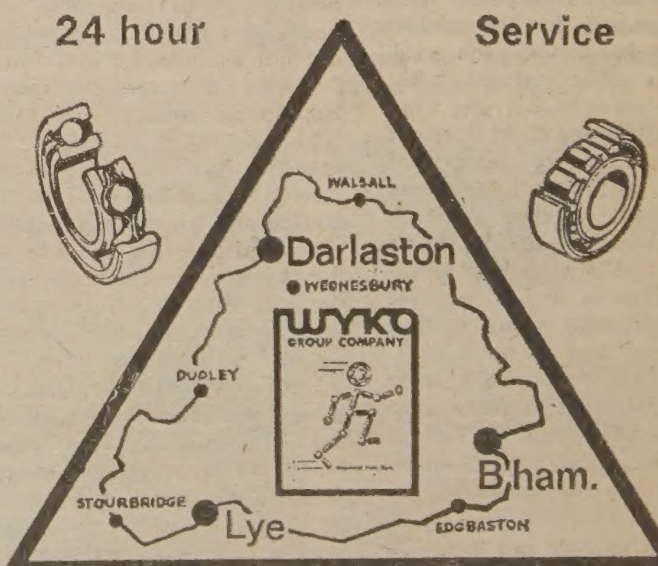
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Their views on needs of handicapped

THE four handicapped people who made such an impression at the conference which followed the Society's Annual General Meeting, are pictured right. They are Miss Alice Moira and Miss Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd, seated, and standing behind them, Mr Alan Counsell and Miss Valerie Lang.

Alice and Rosemary are two of the reasons why The Spastics Society exists today—their fathers were two of the four founder members of the Society. Alice now works as a hospital social worker, and Rosemary is studying with the Open University. Valerie,



who holds a BSc in economics, is a librarian with the Civil Aviation Authority, and Alan Counsell, the father of three

young children, teaches mentally handicapped spastic children at the Society's Meldreth Manor School.

Mothers told: Don't feel birth of spastic child is your fault

VALERIE LANG was once asked if she blamed her mother for the fact that she was spastic. She was completely astonished by the question. 'I was aghast. Such an idea had never entered my head, and I am most distressed that it should have entered anyone else's.'

But subsequently, she discovered that some mothers did feel that the birth of a spastic child was somehow their fault, so when she spoke to hundreds of delegates at the AGM, Miss Lang had this message: 'Perhaps those of you who are parents of handicapped children have sometimes blamed yourselves. Don't. PLEASE don't. No one else does.'

Miss Lang said she was worried that some mothers had lingering feelings of guilt because they had enough to cope with already, and it was possible that it may be one of the causes of overprotectiveness.

Overanxious

"It is quite understandable that one feels a desperate need to compensate for the misfortune of handicap," she said. "This is only natural. But overprotectiveness is just what the handicapped child does not need. Learning is hard enough without having an overanxious mother flapping about, worried lest he hurts himself. That is a fact of life. The miraculous thing is that knees heal, and go on healing. True, mine now take a little longer, but that is reasonable after 30-odd years of falling on them. It is a very small price to pay for the ability to walk."

Just as parents can be over-protective, so The Spastics Society is sometimes accused of paternalism, said Miss Lang, who felt that this was partly due to the fact that many of the people it helped were of subnormal intelligence. But today, when the Society was working hard at meeting the ever changing needs of its clients, she did not think it fair to accuse it of paternalism, but the accusation could still be levelled at some members and some of its employees.

Miss Lang made a plea for the handicapped person to play a multiple role in the

Society because 'though we do need help, quite a few of us are also willing to give it.' While the spastic people who can give opinions were not wholly representative of the multiply handicapped, she said, 'the fact that we are physically handicapped gives us a certain slant which few, if any, able-bodied people ever have.'

Miss Alice Moira, who spoke on education for the disabled, said it was particularly important for handicapped children to be given the best possible education and training available because they must show the world that they have overcome their most obvious limitations before being able to make independent adult lives for themselves.

Everyone involved in education and services for handicapped youngsters had a responsibility to see that the needs of a particular handicap did not exclude the individual from the fullest possible membership of society, she said. 'This responsibility extends to ensuring handicapped persons receive specialist services as needed and for as long as they are required—like the use of the present dental service—and not according to pre-conceived notions of the needs of people covered by specialist labels.'

Specialist handicapped labels, said Miss Moira, often led to the provision of services based on a congregation of 'handicapped types' into groups or communities. These may provide the best opportunities for a few people, and they may be modern, enlightened, well staffed, educational and economically expedient, but they ran the risk of giving the handicapped individuals a social disadvantage. They could create what Miss Moira described as a 'handicapped subculture' thriving on constant and largely exclusive contact with other handicapped people. The result was that handicapped people would become socially isolated because they would be unable to communicate with people outside the community.

Records

He also stressed the importance of every disabled person knowing what was written on their medical records held by the Ministry, and being aware that they had the right to disagree with the recorded information. The records, he claimed, were often written up after a 10-minute interview or examination. In his own case he discovered that his record stated that he would never be able to use public transport! Incorrect statements on records could affect the disabled person's chances of the right employment, he said.

Miss Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd was in the chair for the talks by Miss Lang, Miss Moira and Mr Counsell, and a lively question and answer session which followed.

Cont from Page 6

brass figureheads—adept only at using a rubber stamp.

He wanted to reassure the meeting that Council members were more conscious than ever of the responsibilities they had taken on and appreciated that in effect, and indeed in law, they were the directors of the organisation.

Other points from the Chairman's speech...

On VAT: 'Local authorities are accorded special treatment. Voluntary bodies, such as The Spastics Society, which also serve the community and underwrite heavily both the taxpayer and ratepayer by providing necessary services for the handicapped, lack similar privileges. For example, if a local authority wants to buy school equipment it can do so without incurring VAT, but if the Society does so it is obliged to pay VAT.'

On the Lotteries Act: 'This Act—although giving charities greater scope in running lotteries—also contains provisions to allow local authori-

Inflation to blame for soaring costs

THE Spastics Society's income increased by a healthy £83,000 during the last financial year, but expenditure rose by a colossal £900,000. This was the disturbing news from the Society's Hon Treasurer, Mr John Grenier, at the AGM, and he put the blame on 'corrosive inflation,' which on the one hand worked against public generosity and on the other increased the Society's costs dramatically.

He said that the Society's Chairman, Mr Dorrien Belson, neatly summarised the effects of inflation in the Annual Report when he said that any housewife who constantly sees the money in her purse buying less goods and services than ever before will understand the problems of the Society where 'house-keeping' is on such a massive scale.

Mr Grenier went on: 'Higher living costs coupled with other increased charges have pushed up the cost of maintaining our many schools and centres by no less than £427,000 during the year under review.'

'Last year the total running costs of our schools and centres amounted to £3,691,000. Of this sum local authorities contributed only £2,226,000—thus leaving a substantial difference of nearly £1,500,000 to be met by the Society and its generous supporters.'

They must pay

Mr Grenier said the Society continues to press for a more realistic contribution from both central and local government. 'It must be accepted that the many services that we provide are relieving those authorities from the need of establishing their own training and care facilities for the disabled. We believe they are morally obliged to supply fees that will cover the total cost of the facilities we provide. I said morally obliged, but I would be stronger than this indeed, it is their legal obli-



Mr John Grenier

gation to do so.'

He reported that the Society had been successful in negotiating fees from a number of local authorities, which were now paying 95 per cent towards the upkeep of a child in our schools, and 90 per cent for maintenance of an adult in some residential units. But local authorities as a whole still only contribute in aggregate 72 per cent of the running costs of schools and centres. He said he would not be content until all the running costs were fully covered by local authority fees and grants, as in Scotland, and went on: 'The resources of the Society should be used primarily for pioneering new techniques and in opening up new areas of training and welfare; they should also be used in the constant research and observation of both the physical and psychological needs of those entrusted to our care.'

On future projects, Mr Grenier said that the Executive Council had now approved building contracts amounting to £2,180,000. 'This decision taken in time of general economic stringency could perhaps be questioned by the more cautious among us. But our arithmetic is good, for by proceeding now we calculate an eventual saving of some £300,000. As more and more estimates for this work were obtained it became clear that to delay expenditure now

would mean incurring ever greater proportional costs in the future, because building and other ancillary costs are forecast to rise at an alarming rate.'

He reported that the Society had withdrawn £680,000 from the Building Programme Equalisation Fund to help finance the new building programme. The balance of £975,000 in the Fund will serve as security towards future programmes. In addition to new construction work, some of the Fund money had also been used to finance alterations, extensions and general improvements to existing schools and centres, 'so that they became more comfortable and safer places in which to live and work.'

Welfare

Mr Grenier said that the Society had also expanded its social, welfare and employment services and over £460,000 is now spent in this field compared with £350,000 for the previous year. Some of this increase was due to rising salaries, but real gains were also made.

He spoke of the work of the Samaritan Fund which the Society set up to aid any spastic person in urgent need of financial support. Last year the Fund increased its grants and direct monetary aid from £13,000 to £21,000, 'a modest sum compared with the other figures we have heard today, not enough certainly, but still in accountancy terms an increase of over 50 per cent.'

At the last AGM said Mr Grenier, he was able to report 'with some degree of confidence that the Society continued to hold its own despite the cruel ravages of inflation.'

Cash reserves

'This year, even though the picture presented by the accounts is not so immediately reassuring, we have nevertheless managed to come through a most difficult year with moderate success, especially when compared with so many other charities.'

The Society's success, he said, had been possible because of the reserves and investments permanently built up over the years which allowed the Society to not only maintain current services, but go ahead with new projects despite a reduced level of real income.

Chairman's report to AGM

ties to run lotteries within certain limits. This could, unfortunately, affect charitable fund-raising considerably both at national and local level. We shall, therefore, be keeping a very careful watch on its operation.

Our charity pools: 'The Pool Competitions Act, 1971, comes up for review next year. At the time when it appeared as though charitable pools might be endangered, the Society and other interested voluntary bodies mounted a big campaign to alert both politicians and the public to the dangers of strangling this vital financial lifeline. The British press gave us full support at the time; and, as we pointed out then, many of our schools and centres could not have been built—indeed could not continue to run—without the income from the Spastics Pool. It therefore remains essential for the Society and all its groups to press for the reten-

tion of the basic provisions of the Act.'

On the Spastics Pool: 'We are fortunate to have here with us today the Managing Director and fellow Directors of Top Ten Promotions Ltd, who run the Spastics Pool and provide the Society with its biggest source of appeals income. I want to thank them not only for the truly magnificent efforts they have made, and are making, for the cerebral palsied, but also for the way in which they are so ready to give of their time to become involved in various Society events. Top Ten's executives do not just work for us—they also work with us. May this long continue.'

'Although the Spastics Pool weekly contribution is paid directly to the Society, this money benefits not just the national Society but also the whole organisation right throughout the country. For instance, it is the money from

the Pool which has enabled the Society to contribute to past, and present, local group projects, as well as helping provide national centres. Similarly, money from the Pool helps support all those staff working with local groups, as well as the various specialists at headquarters whose expertise is made freely available to groups. It helps subsidise our Visiting Aids Centre which travels throughout the country carrying vital information on aids and equipment to the disabled everywhere. It helps maintain the national schools and centres with their intake from all over England and Wales; underwrites the assessment and counselling facilities at Fitzroy Square, and our industrial training programmes for young disabled workers.

'Pools money benefits, in some way or other, each one of our local groups, either directly or indirectly. This is why I would ask everyone at this meeting to consider ways and means by which we can all give the Spastics Pool still greater backing.'



Coombe Farm is such 'a good place to live'

IF you go down in the woods at Croydon today you might well be in for at least a mild surprise. Particularly if you visit Coombe Farm, the Society's Adult Residential Centre, which is tucked away among the trees there.

There have been quite a few changes there over the past year or so. Nothing startling. No overnight transformations. But the centre — which is home to 42 spastics — has become brighter and more homely.

For a start most of the bedrooms have been re-decorated, with the residents themselves choosing colour schemes. This has brought about a breakdown of the somewhat drab

uniformity which previously existed. Reminders of this remain in the stark pale green walls and drab brown lino floors of one or two isolated areas which the decorator has not yet reached.

Instead of sleeping on iron framed hospital beds, all but one of the residents now has a tasteful modern divan, with a gaily coloured bedspread which matches the curtains. And all the bedrooms now have wall-to-wall carpeting.

There are little things, such as a specially designed telephone booth for residents, large enough for a wheelchair to enter, with swing doors for easy access. Because of this they can now hold a private telephone conversation, instead of speaking from a phone fixed to the corridor wall, where anyone could overhear.

Coombe Farm has done away with the idea of employing a housekeeper to keep the place clean and tidy. Warden Barry Peet believes that given the right kind of help and encouragement residents can do most of the work themselves, and at the same time achieve a large measure of independence.

For this reason they now have an 'Aids to Home Living' class which is run by Barry's wife Pauline. Men and women residents alike learn how to wash clothes, cook their own dinner, bake cakes, sew on buttons, and carry out the thousand and one little household tasks which most of us take for granted.

One resident has even been given the job of cleaner. Armed with a vacuum cleaner, electric polisher, brooms and brushes which he operates from his wheelchair, he keeps the place spotless.

By mutual agreement, nearly all the residents attend the workshop compulsorily. There they carry out a variety of jobs from sticking labels on to match boxes, to basket weaving.

Two of the residents have a



SPASTICS News goes to Coombe Farm to explore the way of life at one of The Spastic Society's oldest residential centres. The grand old Elizabethan farmhouse is home to 42 severely handicapped spastics, some of whom have lived there since it opened more than 20 years ago. Says Warden Barry Peet:

★ ★ ★

thriving little printing concern in operation. They turn out letter heads, invitation tickets, greeting cards and so on, by the thousand.

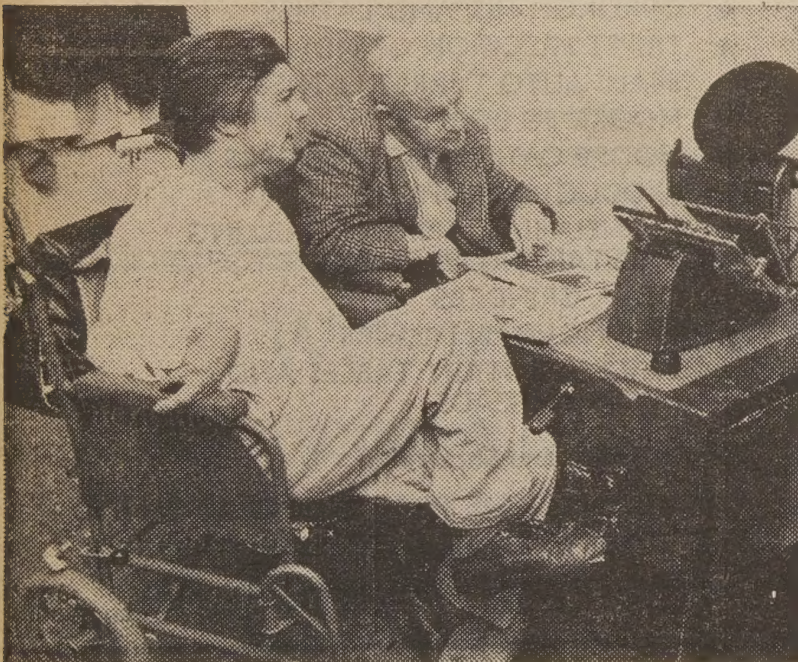
But for Stephen Gardiner, the workshop is a thing of the past. Stephen has gained something of a reputation as an artist. He paints with a brush held by his feet. And he has been doing so well that he has decided to go independent.

Just off the workshop is the Possum room where two Possum typewriters are in

Cont on Page 10

'It's a good place to live and invite your friends back to. Of course we have our ups and downs, the same as any household.

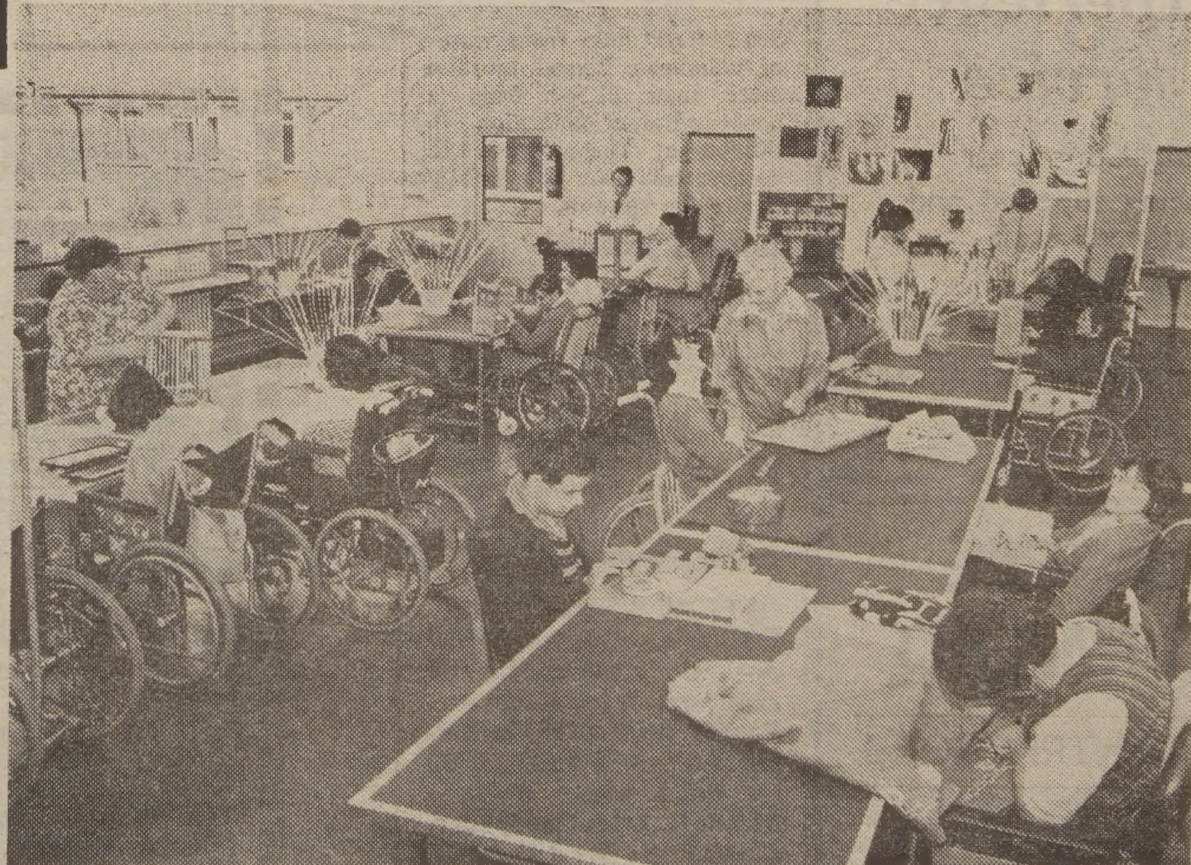
But fundamentally it's a home with a warm atmosphere where residents and staff can live and work well together.'



VISITING cards, letter heads, dance tickets and so on are printed in their hundreds by the two-man team of Mr Bill Burt and Mr Ian Borrowman.



EVERYTHING in the garden is lovely for Miss Jean Leonard and Mr John Cooper, two of Coombe Farm's gardening fanatics. The little flower beds are raised up to wheelchair height.



THE workshop at Coombe Farm is a hive of activity, with jobs ranging from sticking labels on to matchboxes, to basket work.

ABOVE: Craft work is a popular occupation at Coombe Farm. Mr Bill Taylor gives the finishing touch to basketwork ornamental wheelbarrows, with a coat of varnish.



LEFT: Sorting out the week's laundry is Miss Katie Foster Holt.



BELOW: Miss Marion Harris uses this enormous loom to weave bathmats from offcuts of nylon.





AIDS to home living is a special class designed to help residents learn everyday domestic activities such as cooking and washing. Here Mr Ray Degussa, helped by Mrs Pauline Peet, makes a risotto for his dinner.

'A good place to live'

Cont from Page 9

operation. For some residents, these are their only real means of communication. And another room is set aside for electric typewriters. Each resident has his or her own. Without them, letter writing would involve dictating to a houseparent or some other member of the carestaff. Private correspondence would be impossible, and for people with speech difficulties as well as poor hand co-ordination, even dictation would be an arduous process.

One of the activities not catered for at Coombe Farm just now, is farming. Previous attempts at poultry farming came to grief when someone stole all the geese and a fox killed off 100 chickens.

But there is an active gardening club, with residents tending plots raised up to wheelchair height.

Another alternative to the work centre is the pottery room. Here residents produce pendants, vases, bowls and ornaments which provide a

very useful source of income.

Residents please themselves how they spend their leisure time. There is transport to take them into the busy centre of Croydon, which despite Coombe Farm's rural setting is just five minutes away by car. There are three television lounges, so that there is never any argument about which channel to watch. Two of the residents keep an aviary. Two more run the tuck shop. There are outings, film shows, and visits by local theatre groups. And interest in horse riding is mounting all the time, so that a group of residents regularly attend stables at Sevenoaks.

Coombe Farm is one of the Society's oldest centres, and some of the residents have lived there since it opened more than 20 years ago. During those years ideas and attitudes towards residential care have changed considerably. But the idea of 'home' as somewhere one can live in security, comfort and independence, remains unaltered. And this is certainly to be found at Coombe Farm.

News in brief

A MYSTERY donation of £250 in pound notes has swelled the Barrow and District Spastic and Handicapped Children's Society funds. The gift came in a plain white envelope, unaddressed and unsigned.

The money will go towards a new minibus to replace the current one which is eight years old. Chairman of the Society, Mr Denis Rose, said it was the biggest anonymous donation they had received. 'It certainly restores one's faith in human nature,' he said.

A SPASTIC man living in Pontypool, can now have a Light Writer, thanks to committee members of Erw'r Delyn Old Scholars Association, in Swansea. The committee members are themselves physically handicapped, and they raised money from a sponsored wheelchair push.

One of them, Mr Clive Gully, of Cardiff, covered 15 miles in three hours. The minimum distance covered was 10 miles.

The Light Writer will be presented at the Old Scholars Christmas Party. For the man receiving it, the machine will be a major aid to communication, since he is unable to read.

A GIFT of £3,000 from The Spastics Society towards the cost of an extension to the Scartho Road Hospital day centre for handicapped children, in Grimsby, will enable building to start shortly. The South Humberside Spastics Society has also contributed a further £1,000 towards the total cost of £12,050.

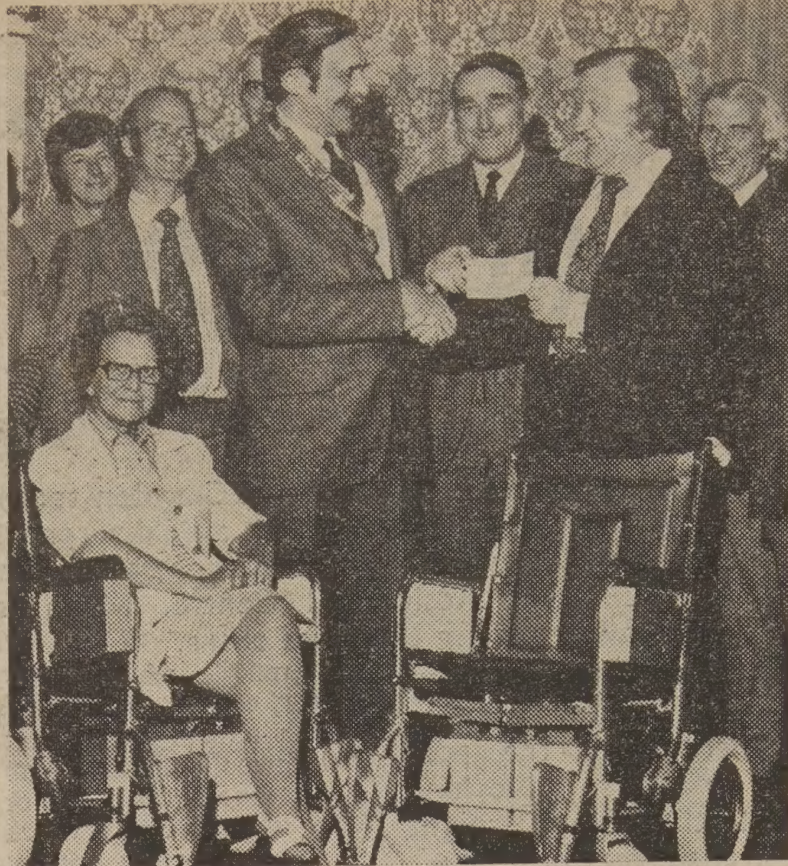
FOR the third year in succession, the Edinburgh mother of a spastic teenage son went to the trouble of organising a Highland dancing competition and raised more than £120 for the new Trinity Centre for spastics in the city.

The contestants numbered exactly 199—a pretty good figure—and they came from all parts of Scotland, from Galloway in the south to Inverness and Aberdeen in the north, said Mrs Jean McKirdy, of Mentone Terrace, Portobello. Taking part were Mrs McKirdy's two daughters, Shena and Morag.

SPLendid help from scores of volunteers helped to raise more than £1,500 from a house-to-house collection in Edinburgh. The proceeds will be devoted to the new Trinity Centre for spastics.

THE Maidstone group of The Spastics Society has donated £1,000 towards a short stay project for severely handicapped children and adults at Bognor Regis. And on November 1 the group held a sponsored swim to raise money for spastics.

OFFERS AND WANTS
FOR sale.—Braune 'Batic' 3-wheel electric invalid chair; only a few hours use. Present price £412, including VAT; will accept £330 for quick sale. Write.—Mrs J. R. Day, Coneybury, Hook Lane, West Hoathly, East Sussex (or telephone Sharpthorne 200, evenings).



Gift from Rotarians

BUXTON Rotary Club has been helping local spastic residents to get around. They handed over a cheque for £750 to cover the cost of two Newton electric wheelchairs to the Buxton Spastics Society. This presentation took place at the Society's Buxton Centre. Above, the warden of the Centre, Mr Dexter Simpson (centre) receives the cheque from Mr Jeffrey Wilkinson, president of Buxton Rotary Club.

Photo by courtesy of the Buxton Advertiser and Herald.

New advice on feeding

THE Spastics Society has published a new booklet about the feeding problems of the spastic child.

If a child is to learn to speak properly it is vital that correct feeding patterns are established at a very early age.

The booklet is intended to provide some guide-lines for parents, health visitors, houseparents, therapists and others dealing with handicapped children.

Called 'Feeding Can be Fun,' by Mary Ryan, LCST, the booklet costs 38p post-paid and can be obtained from the Bookshop, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

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World's premiere charity pool

Cont from Page 6

Pool, the one millionth member was enrolled. The drive, enthusiasm, and effort of the originators of the Pool resulted in it becoming the premier charity pool in the world.

Mr Arter went on to detail the legal proceedings stretching from magistrates court to House of Lords—in which the integrity and standing of Top Ten was never questioned—which culminated in a sum in the region of £10 million ultimately going to the Exchequer as a result of the Lords decision on the Betting Duties case in 1969. He spoke of the concerted effort from Top Ten and the Society, leading up to the presentation of the Pool Competitions Bill to Parliament in April 1971, in which the two organisations had learned how successfully they could be working together. The Bill became law, and until June 1976, the competition, and the Society's income from the Pool have guaranteed protection.

Speaking of the involvement of Top Ten personnel in the work of the Society, Mr Arter had special praise for the collectors, 'the backbone of our organisation,' whom he said, certainly did not give their time and effort for the financial reward. From each 8p weekly subscription the collector may deduct 1p commission, so must service 100 members a week before obtaining £1 commission. He had to contend with bad debts, and if the collection round was rural, there were travelling expenses to pay. There were ancillary benefits to collectors, but Mr Arter said he was convinced that money was not the greatest motivating factor.

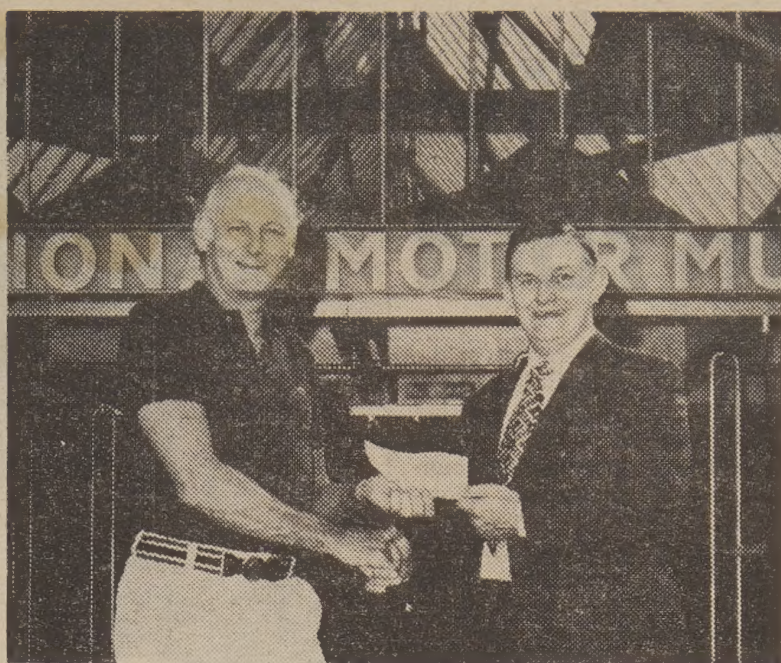
News about the Spastics Pool

Supervisors see work of Society

A SERIES of meetings involving supervisors and head office staff of Top Ten Promotions were held during November and early December at Spastics Society centres. The purpose of these meetings was to keep the company's field representatives up to date with the latest development and policies relating to the Spastics Pool.

The first, held at Wakes Hall, near Colchester, the Stars Organisation for Spastics residential centre marked the introduction of Ricky Gower, the new regional manager for Essex.

The meetings were arranged through Tony Frank, Assistant Director, Regions, The Spastics Society, and the head office team led by Alan Skirvin, executive, and John Pritchard, marketing executive, visited Daresbury Hall residential centre, Sunderland spastics centre, The Mount, Nottingham, Cardiff day centre, Portsmouth spastics work centre, Broadstones hostel, and The Spastics Society headquarters in London.



LORD MONTAGUE, left, presents a Spastics Pool cheque for £2,500 to first dividend winner Mr L. Ward, of Lymington, Hants, at Beaulieu, the National Motor Museum



MRS FRANCIS PEARCE, of Brierfield, Lower Kirby, had cause to smile when she was presented with a cheque for £769.24 as her share of the first dividend on the Spastics Pool. She received her prize from Mr Denis Hawkins at the Maplin Hotel, watched by Mr Arthur Baigent, centre, supervisor for the area.

Spastics Pool needs more members — now

How YOU can join

THE need to increase membership of the Spastics Pool is greater now than at any time in its history. Although the Spastics Pool donates £30,000 each week to The Spastics Society, the present rate of inflation is reducing the purchasing power of this money to such an extent that the Society will need to look to its reserves to continue to provide services for thousands of spastics.

By joining the Spastics Pool members of the general public can contribute to the largest single donation made to the Society. In addition, supporters of the Spastics Pool automatically participate in a weekly nine-dividend football pool plus fixed odds. And the top prize is £10,000. A Gift Scheme ensures that every member receives a prize every three years for each membership card held. Other benefits include special competitions which offer fabulous prizes of holidays abroad. And members have their own travel service and accidental insurance scheme.

All these benefits make the Spastics Pool the best value for money at 8p a week.

There are two ways in which members are recruited. Firstly through an official collector who collects the weekly subscription and distributes a bulletin giving details of matches, results and other information. Or secondly, there is a subscription scheme which provides the facility for

the payment of subscriptions every 12 weeks, 24 weeks and 51 weeks, direct to head office.

For further information about joining the Spastics Pool please write to the Subscription Manager, Spastics Pool, Top Ten Promotions Ltd, PO Box No 215, 104 Stokes Croft, Bristol BS99 7QX.

Remember every subscription helps the Society.

Get-together for collectors

AN evening for Shropshire collectors and friends was held at the Swallow Club, Whitchurch, with arrangements made by supervisor SH65, Mr Stan Pritchard. Guests were entertained by cabaret artists introduced by Bob Greig who, although it was his first time, did a wonderful job as MC.

Head office was represented by members of the Marketing Department and the company slide and film presentation was shown at the beginning of the evening.

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SN Dec32

'Hands off mobility money' taxman told

THE Government's new mobility allowance—which comes into effect next month—has come under fire from the Central Council for the Disabled on two major issues. In an interim report, a special working party set up by the CCD criticises the facts that the allowance is subject to tax, and that a person ceases to qualify after reaching retirement age.

The report states: 'Opinion is strongly opposed in principle to making the mobility allowance taxable, and to making any other social security benefit or allowance taxable.' It pointed out that special allowances designed to meet special expenses should not be taxable. The expenses are incurred in full and therefore should be met in full.

The working party further stated that there was strong pressure for all disabled car owners to be made exempt from all forms of tax on motoring, including excise duty, VAT on purchase cost, petrol, etc, and special car tax.

Many of the 19,000 drivers who currently receive the private car allowance would have little to gain by transferring to the new mobility allowance. These drivers were already exempt from the £40 a year vehicle excise duty.

Coupled with the private car allowance this gave them £140.

The mobility allowance of £260 less tax at 35 per cent, provided only £169.

Referring to the age question, the report said: 'Limitation of entitlement for the adult disabled to persons below pensionable age has aroused widespread condemnation. Concern has also been expressed that disabled women will lose it five years before disabled men.'

It pointed out that old people were often in more need of the allowance than those of working age. Pensionable age was not a realistic concept when applied to disabled people. To deprive pensioners of the allowance could create 'a new class of deprived citizens.'

To extend the mobility allowance to disabled persons now of working age only to remove it when they reach pensionable age, seems to the working party to be an act of gratuitous cruelty which will deservedly provoke widespread

resentment,' the report said.

Before compiling their interim report, the working party held a series of public meetings throughout the country, to explain the new allowance and to tap professional and public opinion. Thousands of questionnaires were distributed from which 20,000 usable replies were received.

It is thought that the mobility allowance will reach about 100,000 people who previously received no help at all towards their transport costs. Previously the ability to drive has been a criterion for eligibility. But the new allowance will go to anyone who is unable to walk, including children.

The report pointed out that the 23,000 users of Government three wheelers would have to make up their minds whether to retain the vehicles or opt for the mobility allowance. It felt that most would keep their cars, because in the current inflationary climate, the vehicle together with tax and insurance, was worth more than the £260 allowance.

WHAT IS IT?

THE Government's new mobility allowance for disabled people comes into effect in January. What is it? Who qualifies? How do you claim?

● The allowance is £5 a week, and will be paid monthly. It is subject to tax. It can be used in any way you chose, to help overcome mobility problems.

● To qualify you must be unable to walk, or virtually unable to do so. You must also be aged between five and 60 for women, or five and 65 for men. The allowance is being introduced in three stages for different age groups. Currently the 15 to 50 age groups are being asked to apply.

● Applications should be made at your local social security office. Ask for leaflet NI 211 entitled 'Mobility Allowance.'

● As alternatives to the new allowance, drivers can opt for a three wheeler instead. Or if they currently have a Government provided car, this can be retained.

A last chance to enter award

THE Special Achievement Award for Spastics finishes this month and the closing date for entries is Friday, December 8. So long as envelopes are postmarked not later than the 8th, they will be accepted, in view of uncertain postal deliveries.

This is your last chance to nominate a spastic man, woman or young person over 12 for the 1975 Award, and the chance for them to win the first prize of £250, or second or third prizes of £25 and £15 respectively, plus a celebration lunch in London and the opportunity of meeting the Award judges—Sir Geoffrey Jackson, Lady D'Arcy de Knayth, James Cameron, Danny Hearn and Joan Shenton.

The Spastics Society is indebted to J. H. Dewhurst Ltd, the Smithfield butchers, for their generosity in donating the prizes for this Award.

The nomination is for the most outstanding achievement or sustained effort by a spastic person over 12. Entries, with as much information as possible, to the organiser, Mrs Nina Heycock, 88/89 Queen's Gate, South Kensington, SW7.



SOME of the Spastics Pool competition prizewinners on their way to board the plane for Tenerife. On extreme left is collector Mrs Pauline Franklin and her daughter, Diana, 12. Centre is a honeymoon couple, Joan and Peter Lindley, from Manchester, who had planned a holiday in Blackpool but found themselves Canary Islands bound for their first trip abroad ever.

'Holiday of a lifetime' for Spastics Pool prizewinners

MRS Kathleen Butcher, of Wolverhampton, a plump and jolly grandmother, is one of those people who really cares about others. She has been a Pools collector for 15 years, and holds 18 tickets herself.

So it was a great day for her when she learned that she had won a competition of a holiday abroad for two... a trip that eventually cost her nearly £1,300.

Because when Mrs Butcher announced that she would take her grandson, Michael, aged 14, along with her as it would be 'a good education for him,' other members of her family pleaded 'why not me?'

Says the generous Mrs Butcher, 'Well, I didn't want to offend anyone. So as I'd recently sold a bit of land at the back of my house, I decided to splash out and take the lot of them even if I came back absolutely broke.' That's why her party to visit the Canary Islands included two married daughters, their husbands, four grandchildren and a widowed sister.

They were among the 100 prizewinners and their companions flown to Tenerife recently via regular Iberia Airline flights for a week's holiday in a four-star hotel at Puerto de la Cruz.

And what a holiday! Top Ten Promotions and Top Ten Travel had gone to infinite trouble to make sure that everyone had a really good time and the week of a lifetime.

The winners flew out in three separate parties—and I accompanied the largest group of 86 partly to act as a courier and partly to meet some of the men and women who, through their support of 'the Pool,' have done so much to help spastic children and adults.

The holiday prize naturally covered full board as well as travel. But tours are always extra. So Top Ten made sure that nobody would have to miss out on sight-seeing because of shortage of holiday spending money.

During the welcome cocktail reception they presented each delighted winner with a 2,000 peseta voucher (with 120 pesetas to the £ that's nearly £17) to exchange for a number of excursions. And what a wealth of tours to choose from as the scenery in the warm and sunny sub-tropical island of Tenerife ranges from the starkly grand to the lushly green, with nine million banana plants proliferating on any hospitable piece of ground.

Soon after we arrived, Top Ten staged a special Gala Dinner in the hotel's large con-

vention room so that all three different parties of travellers would have the chance to meet up and really get to know one another. Superb food and drink... a great band... a floor show with flamenco dancers... all made for a really swinging party that continued on into the early hours.

No wonder that everyone was so loud in their praises when the time came for us to fly back home. 'Fantastic... out of this world... the holiday of a lifetime' were just some of the ecstatic comments.

Winners on the trip came from all over Britain and included 17 Pools collectors and two area supervisors. Said collector Mrs Pauline Franklin, from Isleworth, Middlesex, who travelled with her 12-year-old daughter, Diana, 'Nothing was spared to make us all feel

like real VIP's. It was a wonderful holiday and something we'll remember all our lives.'

But the last word should go to collector Mrs Butcher who had to pay out £1,300 to keep her whole family happy. Was it worth it?

'Yes, indeed,' said Mrs B. happily, 'Worth every penny. We all had such a lovely time, and with such lovely people. None of us would have missed it for the world.'

● If you don't belong to the Spastics Pool, join now. Read how to on page 11. If you are a subscriber, then enter the regular competitions. Because, I can promise you, you'll never have a better holiday abroad than one laid on by Top Ten Promotions Ltd for their prizewinners.

PAT TAYLOR

SUNSHINE HOTEL FOR SPASTICS

THE Spastics Society is to go ahead with its plans to establish a holiday hotel for the handicapped at Bognor, Sussex. The Society has bought the Shalimar Hotel, in Victoria Drive, Bognor, to convert for spastic guests. The hotel should be operational by summer next year, and local groups in the South East have been asked to help raise £42,000 during the coming year towards the cost.

The hotel is about 150 yards from the sea. It is also within easy reach of the shops, and there are two local pubs. The town centre and railway station are less than a mile away.

At the moment the property comprises a large house with a two storey extension. There is a wide forecourt and a large garden at the back.

Conversion work will take place in two stages. Firstly

the ground floor will be adapted to accommodate eight guests, with the first floor being used for staff and ambulant spastics. Stage two will include the installation of a lift to make the first floor available for the more heavily handicapped.

Altogether it is hoped to provide holiday accommodation for 20 spastics. Short term care in times of family crisis will also be provided. Accommodation for other kinds of handicapped people will be available when possible.

A spokesman for the Society said there was an urgent need for short term accommodation. Many families were at breaking point because of the strain of caring for someone who is severely handicapped. At present they had nowhere to turn for help.

The Society intends to change the name of the hotel. It is sponsoring a competition to think up a suitable new title.



Now John can get about on his own

A TRIP to the shops used to be a major journey for 31-year-old John Moses, who lives at Mena House Hostel, Penarth, in South Wales. And before he could contemplate the trip, he had to find a volunteer to push him the mile there and back. Now John has said goodbye to all that. He can go where and when he pleases, thanks to his new electric wheelchair. Even rail journeys will become possible just as soon as British Rail provide special ramps to enable him to drive on to and off the train. The electric wheelchair was presented by The Spastics Society, Barry, Penarth and District Spastics Society and the Homemakers of Cardiff, who raised £348 to buy it. Pictured with John above are (left to right) Mr Emlyn Davies, SRO for Wales, Mrs Irene Richards, Secretary of the Barry, Penarth and District Spastics Society, Mrs Linda Morgan, Chairman of the Homemakers, and Mr Norman Turner, manager of the hostel.

Picture by courtesy of the South Wales Echo.

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Send coupon (and 10p per entry) to: The Spastics Society, Donaldson House Annex, Massetts Road, Horley, Surrey, to reach us by December 22, 1975. SN Dec48